



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Portland District

PUBLIC NOTICE

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

CASPIAN TERN RELOCATION FY 2001-2002 MANAGEMENT PLAN
& PILE DIKE MODIFICATION
CLATSOP COUNTY, OREGON

CENWP-PM-E-01-01
Issue Date: February 7, 2001
Expiration Date: March 9, 2001

30 Day Notice

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for its proposal to participate in the relocation of a Caspian tern colony from Rice Island, near river mile 20 of the Columbia River to East Sand Island, river mile 5, in Oregon, in order to reduce avian consumption of salmonids. The Corps' work will consist of habitat modification on the eastern end of East Sand Island, plus activities to limit Caspian terns from nesting on Rice Island. Other Federal agencies plan to participate in related actions, including passive and active measures to encourage Caspian terns to nest at East Sand Island and to discourage nesting of Caspian terns returning to Rice Island. Monitoring and evaluating the relocation effort is also proposed. The proposed action was developed with input from the Caspian Tern Working Group, an inter-agency group consisting of participants from the Corps, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bonneville Power Administration, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), and research staff from CRITFC, Oregon State University, and Real Time Research. The Corps also plans to modify 6-12 pile dikes in the Columbia River estuary to discourage cormorants from roosting there.

The FY 2001-2002 Management Plan follows the pilot plan implemented in 1999 and the proposed plan for 2000 with the exception that harassment of terns on Rice Island after egg-laying begins is not proposed and no actions are proposed in Washington. Actions in 1999 resulted in a small portion of the Caspian tern colony moving from Rice Island to nest at East Sand Island. The action in 2000, which proposed prevention of nesting on Rice Island as required in the 1999 Biological Opinion on the Corps' Columbia River Channel Operation and Maintenance Program, was not fully implemented due to a temporary restraining order issued on April 10, 2000, which prohibited the Corps from harassment of terns on Rice Island. Most of the Columbia River Estuary tern colony, about 9,100 breeding pairs, however, did relocate to East Sand Island. About 580 pairs nested on Rice Island. A preliminary injunction remains in effect on Rice Island. Passive, and preferably active, harassment of terns on Rice Island is proposed for 2001-2002, with the understanding that these actions cannot occur unless the injunction is lifted. Lethal take of Caspian terns is not proposed by the Corps.

Environmental Documents: A Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment addressing the impacts associated with the activity is enclosed. Previous public review of similar actions occurred in 1999 and 2000. New information provided to the Corps within the next 30 days will be considered prior to initiating action.

State Water Quality Certification: State Water Quality Certification, pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, is not required as no fill in waters of the United States is proposed.

Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972: Consistency determinations, prepared for the 1999 pilot project and the FY 2000 Management Plan, were concurred with by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. The Federal actions for FY 2001-2002 Plan are similar to those described for 1999 and 2000.

Additional Information and Comments: Questions or comments regarding the enclosed environmental document should be directed to Bob Willis, telephone (503) 808-4760 (Robert.E.Willis@usace.army.mil), or Lynne Hamilton, 808-4772 (lynne.d.hamilton@usace.army.mil), or at the address below. Comments on this notice must be mailed by the closing date to:

District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineer District, Portland
Attn: CENWP-PM-E
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, Oregon 97208-2946

In your response, please refer to the above public notice number, title and date. This document is available for review at <http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/PM/E>.